

When Presentation Supersedes Doctrine, Part 5 - 1 Corinthians 2:12-14 – May 11th, 2014

- Today's teaching will be part five of a series I've titled, "When Presentation Supersedes Doctrine."
- In it we're seeing the Apostle Paul rise from the pages of our Bibles, to show us what can happen when man steals the spotlight from God.
- This because, the church in Corinth had done exactly that. As such they were suffering the consequences that always ensue as a result.
- I believe this is one of the main reasons, if not the main reason; we have a chapter like this in the Bible, namely, to warn us of a similar fate.
- Whether it's for the Christian individually, or the church corporately, this is just as much for us now, as it was for the Corinthians back then.
- I say that because we need look no further than to many of the churches today to see the resemblance to the Corinthian church in that day.

1. It comes at the expense of the Gospel (Verses 1-2)

- The reason Paul didn't come with eloquence or superior wisdom was he resolved to know nothing except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

2. It empties out the power of the Gospel (Verses 3-5)

- He says he came in weakness and fear with much trembling in his preaching so their faith wouldn't rest on men's wisdom but God's power.

3. It competes with the wisdom of God (Verses 6-8)

- Here, Paul in effect says that there was a crossbreeding of sorts, of God's wisdom with man's wisdom, which created a hybrid Christianity.

4. It hampers the deep things of God (Verses 9-11)

- Here Paul says that God has revealed to us by His Spirit, the deep things of God, as opposed to a shallow Christianity by the spirit of man.

5. It hinders the Spirit of God (Verses 12-14)

(12) We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. (13) This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. (14) The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

- v12 He says we've not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God that we may understand what God has freely given us.
- v13 He says we speak, not in words taught by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.
- v14 He says the man without the Spirit doesn't accept or understand things from the Spirit. It's foolish because they're spiritually discerned.

- What Paul is saying is the degree in which I receive the spirit of God, is proportionate to the degree in which I reject the spirit of the world.
- The reason being is, the spirit of the world will hinder, even quench the Spirit of God, so much so that we won't understand spiritual truths.
- Actually, this presupposes that we've been born again of the Spirit of God such that we have received the Holy Spirit Who lives inside us.

- However, if one isn't born again of the Spirit of God then they will only have the spirit of the world, which is why spiritual truth is foolishness.
- Verse fourteen answers the question of why it is that people who are not born again of the Spirit of God find the Word of God very boring.
- Moreover, it also answers the question of why it is that people who are not born again of the Spirit of God find the church of God so boring.

Charles Spurgeon - "The whole of mankind may correctly be divided into natural and spiritual, and these are as distinct as the dead and the living. The natural man has no spirit, and cannot therefore discern spiritual things. In the new birth a spirit is implanted in us, and thus we gain spiritual faculties, we live in a spiritual atmosphere, and are capable of spiritual joys."

- The fact of the matter is this is what the heart of the matter is, more specifically I'm either still in the natural or I'm born anew in the spiritual.
- I'll take it a step further and suggest I can be born anew in the spiritual, yet still be carnal, vis-à-vis my acquiescing to the spirit of the world.
- Perhaps better said, when I'm carnal I'll dance to the spirit of the world's beat on human wisdom's drum, which quenches the Spirit of God.

- This begs the question of how we as Christians grieve and quench the Holy Spirit. Please indulge me as I share just two ways we do this.

1) We can grieve the Holy Spirit by what we say with our mouths, and the bitterness, un-forgiveness and anger we hold on to in our hearts.

Ephesians 4:29-32 NKJV Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. (30) And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. (31) Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. (32) And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

2) We can quench the Holy Spirit by our impatience and unkindness to others, and rendering evil for evil when we are wronged by others.

1 Thessalonians 5:14-19 NKJV (14) Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all. (15) See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all. (16) Rejoice always, (17) pray without ceasing, (18) in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (19) Do not quench the Spirit.

- I'll bring the sermon to a close by pointing out four ways that we can identify whether or not we are grieving and quenching the Holy Spirit.

1st - I won't be in the Word of God by virtue of how it has become dry and boring.

2nd - My prayer life will suffer to the point of becoming canned at best and non-existent at worst.

3rd - I will no longer possess a spiritual understanding and discernment for spiritual things.

4th - I'll begin having an appetite for the things of this world, which will make the things of God start to seem foolish.

- So, what do I do if I've done this? At the risk of an oversimplification, let me say lastly, you need to both feed the Spirit and starve the flesh.